

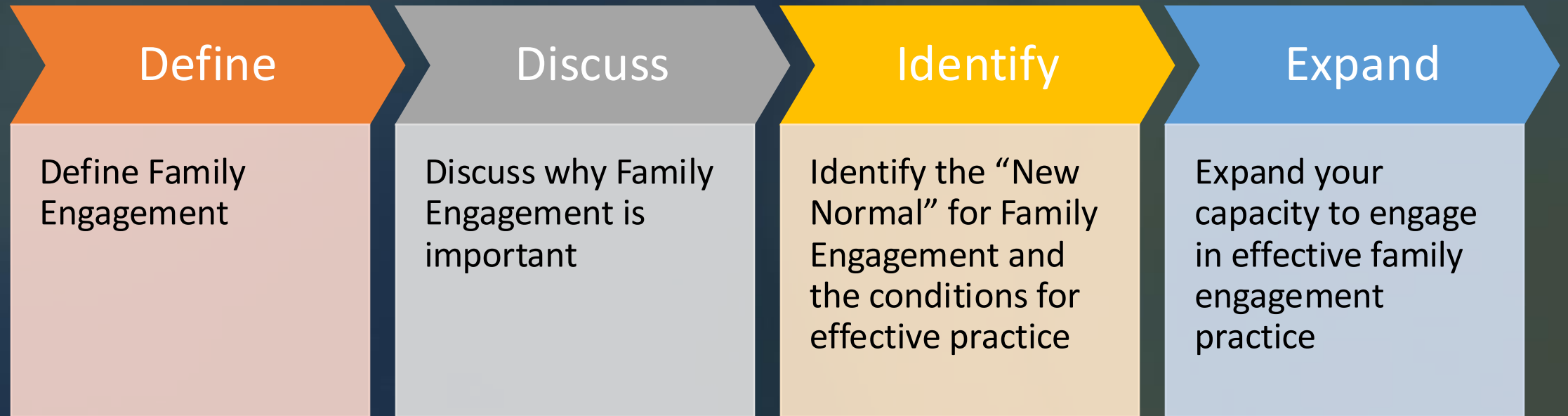
# Family Engagement Seminar

## Building the Capacity for Effective Family-School Partnerships

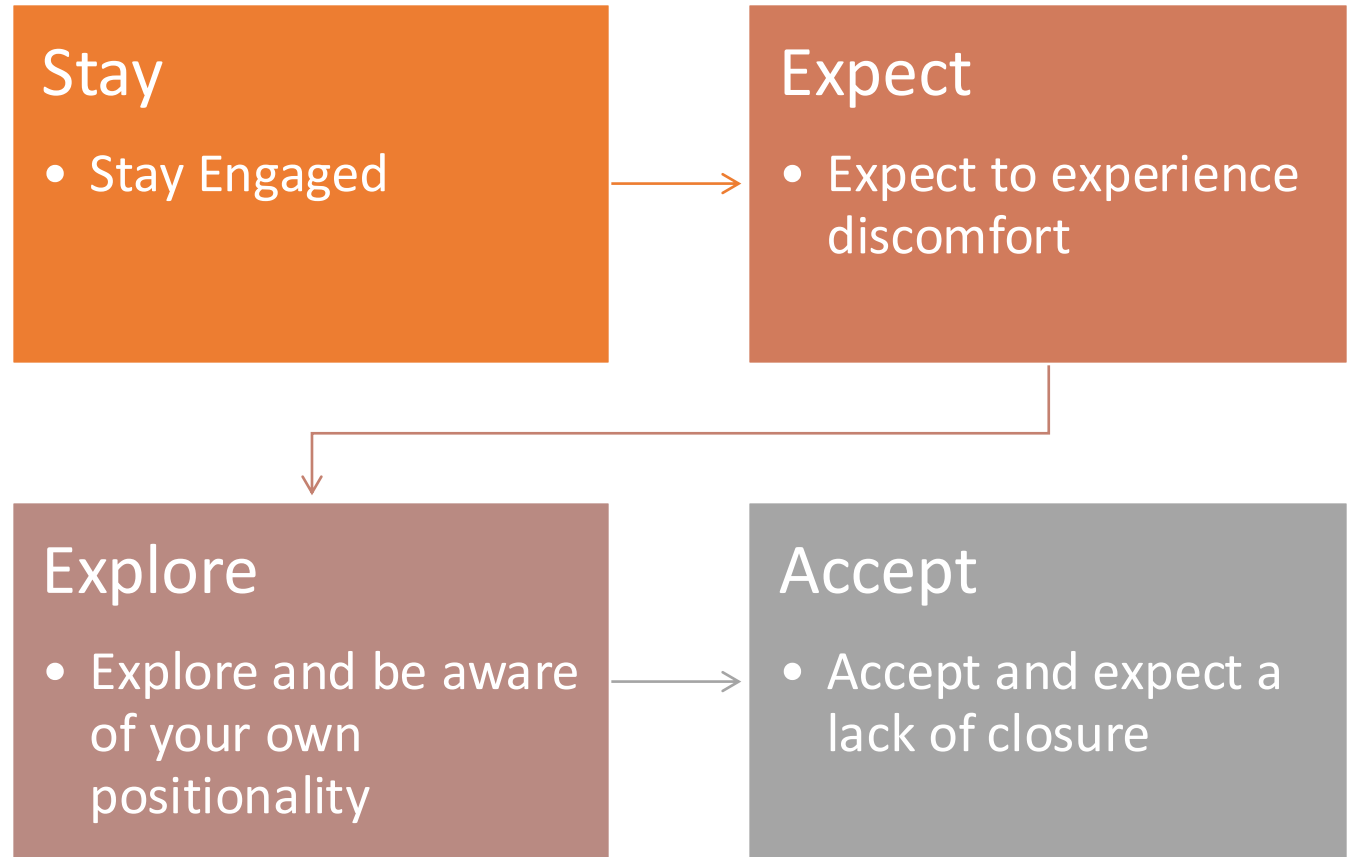
Karen L. Mapp, EdD

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# Goals for this Session



# Community Learning Norms





# Defining Family Engagement

**Small Group Discussion:**  
**10 minutes – Identify someone in**  
**your group to report out.**

What struck you in this video of  
Jessica – is there anything she  
said or did that stood out?  
What are your  
noticings/wonderings?  
What are your take-aways?





# CT State Department of Education

## Definition of Family Engagement

Family Engagement is a ***full, equal, and equitable partnership*** among families, educators and community partners to promote children's learning and development from birth through college and career.



# Family *Involvement*


# Involvement versus Engagement

- Focuses on individual responsibility
  - Communication to families is one-way
  - Space for listening is a low priority
  - Focuses on programming, not people
  - Relationship is transactional
- Focuses on collective responsibility and partnership
  - Communication with families is two-way and listening is prioritized
  - Family knowledge is valued and honored
  - Focuses on collaborative practice
  - Relationship is transformative




Ron  
Covington:  
Involvement  
versus  
Engagement





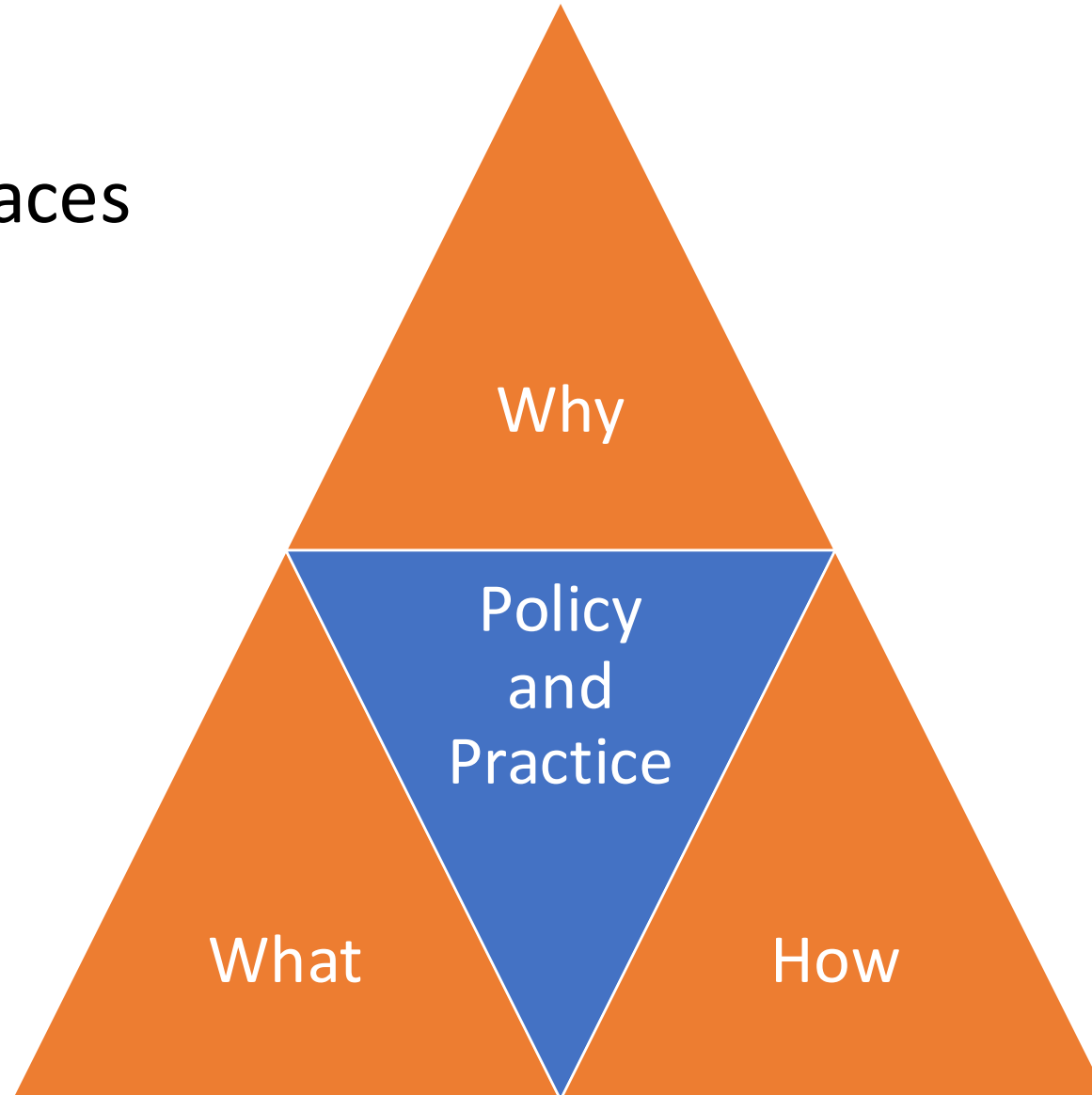
Larry  
Ferlazzo,  
author and  
public school  
teacher

“A school striving for **family involvement** often leads with its mouth—identifying projects, needs, and goals and then telling parents how they can contribute. A school striving for **family engagement**, on the other hand, tends to lead with its ears—listening to what parents think, dream, and worry about. The goal of family engagement is not to serve clients but to gain partners.”



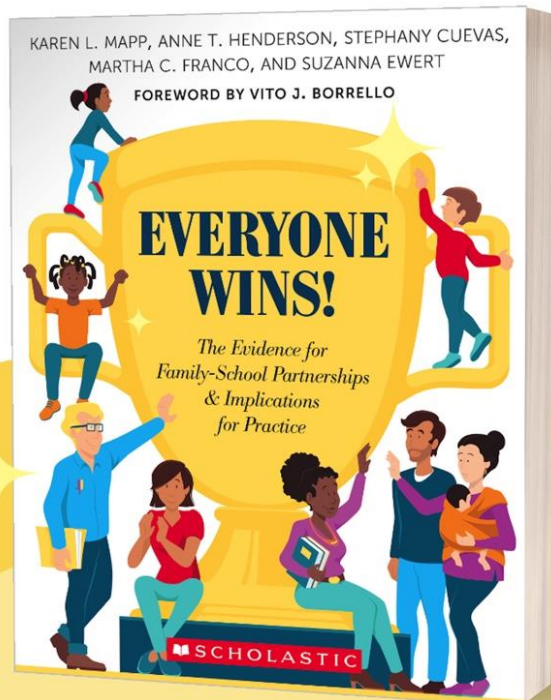
# Shift from Involvement to Engagement

## The Three Spaces



# Why is Family Engagement Important?





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Everyone Wins! - Fifth  
installment of the *Evidence* series

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20 years since the publication of  
*A New Wave of Evidence*

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Selected 40 studies out of over  
100 reviewed

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Studies span from 2002-2021



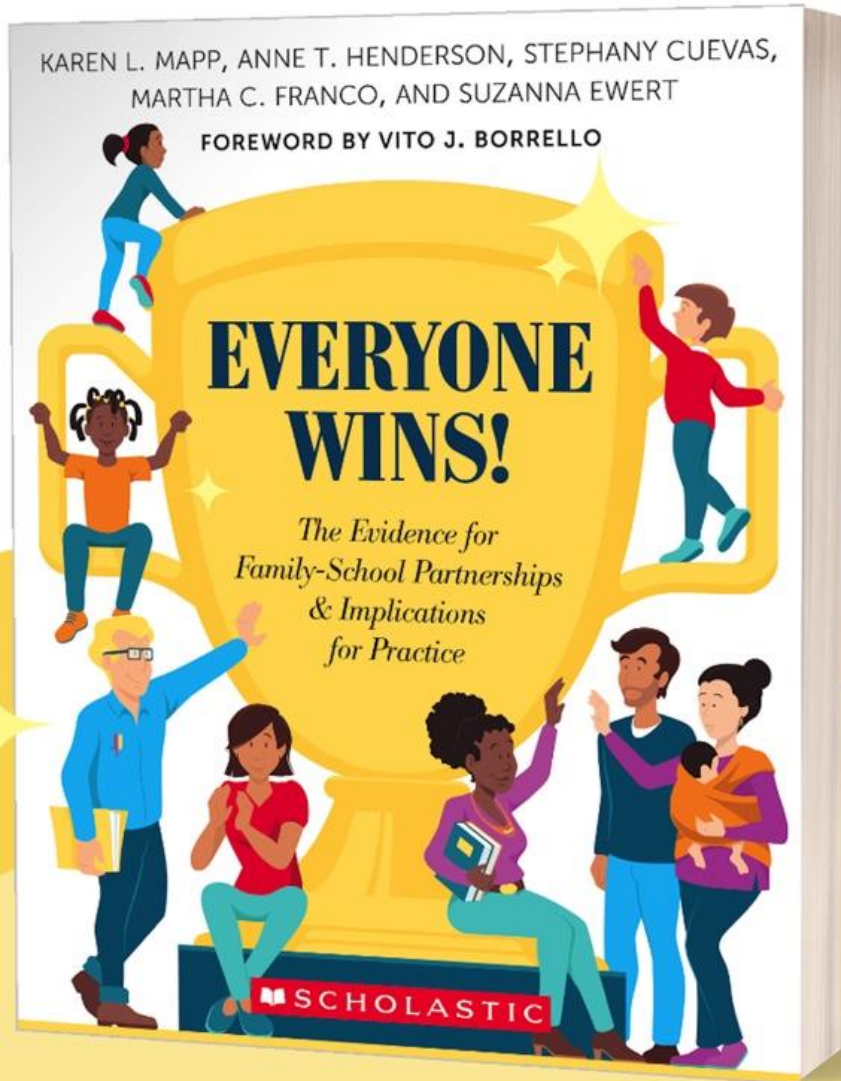


Extra! Extra!

Two Big Headlines  
from our review of  
the 40 studies

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1) Home—school partnerships benefit not only our students, but also educators, families, schools, districts, and communities.

2) We know the conditions for high impact practice.



# Wins for Students

- Higher grades and test scores
- Better attendance and engagement in class
- More positive attitudes and behavior
- Greater sense of efficacy and self-esteem
- Higher graduation rates and college/postsecondary attendance



# Wins for Educators:

- Shift from deficit-to asset-based thinking about students and families
- Increased multicultural awareness and appreciation
- Greater success motivating and engaging students
- More support from families
- Stronger morale and professional satisfaction



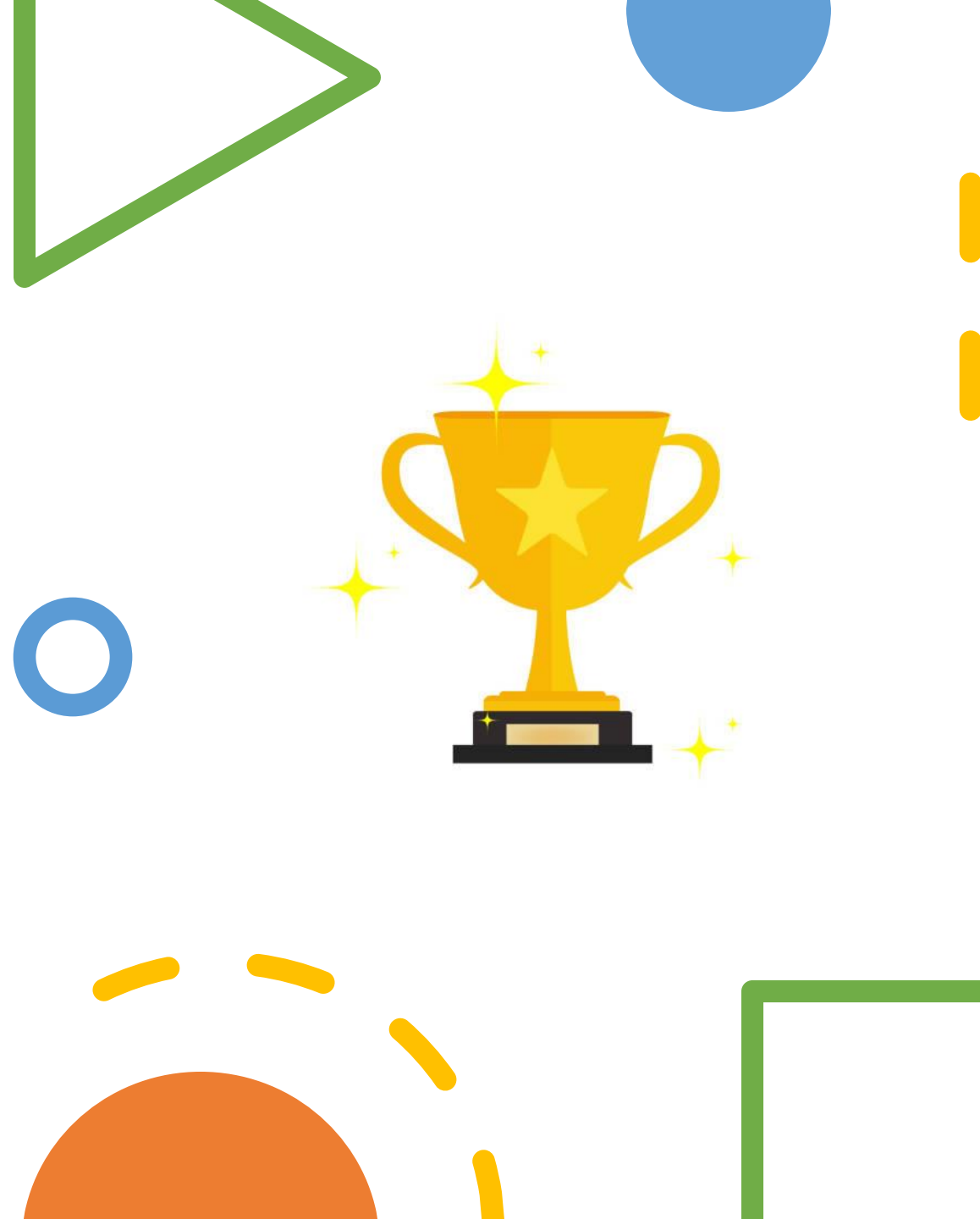
# Wins for Families

- Stronger parent-child relationships
- Better rapport with teachers and school staff
- Greater understanding of child's progress and how to help
- More knowledge and skill in advocating for their child
- Increased deep and supportive social connections



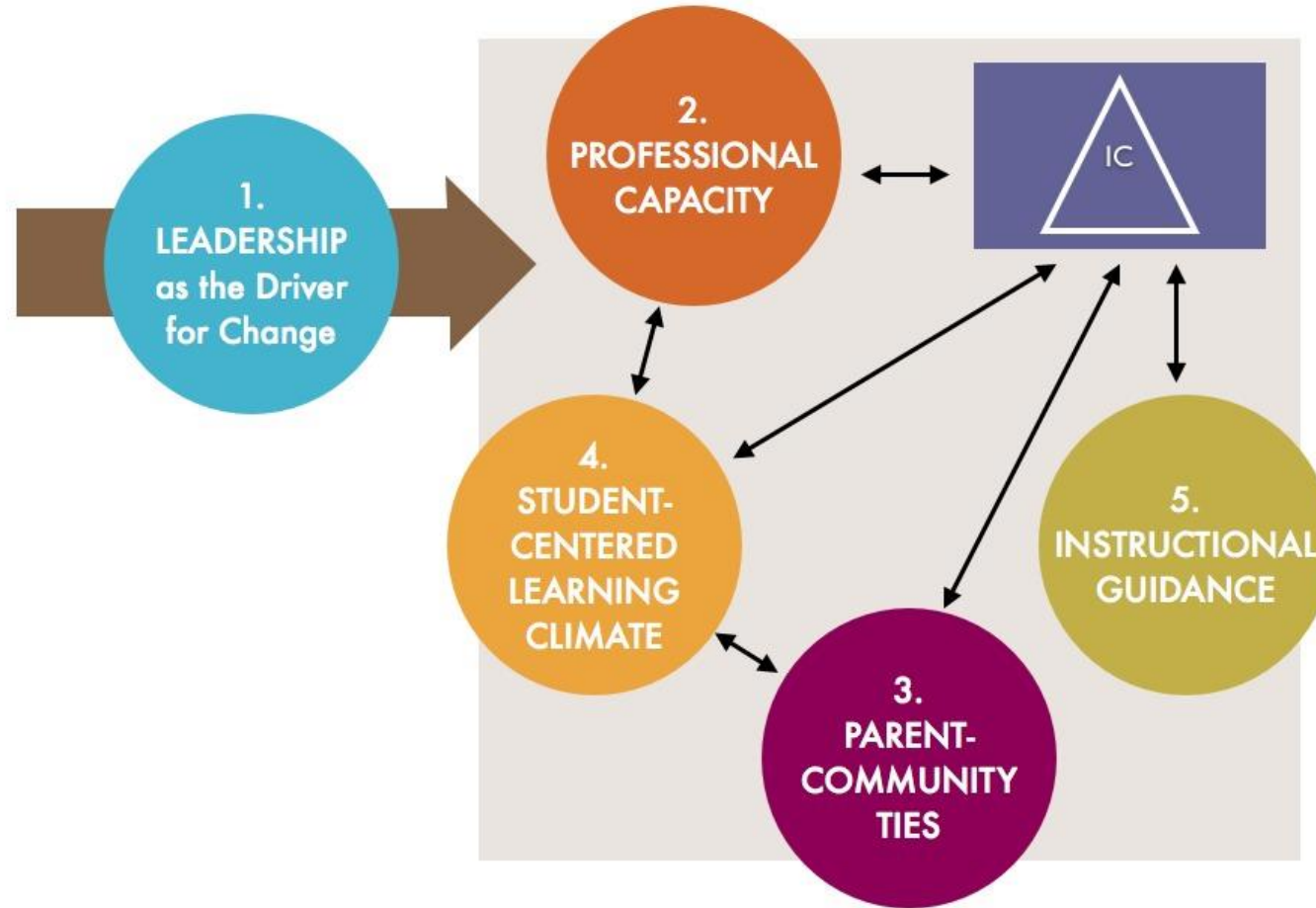
# Wins for Schools

- More positive school climate
- Higher morale and greater retention of teachers
- Improved facilities, better curriculum, and higher-quality programs
- More responsive to community concerns
- Better reputation and more support from the community



# FIVE ESSENTIAL SUPPORTS

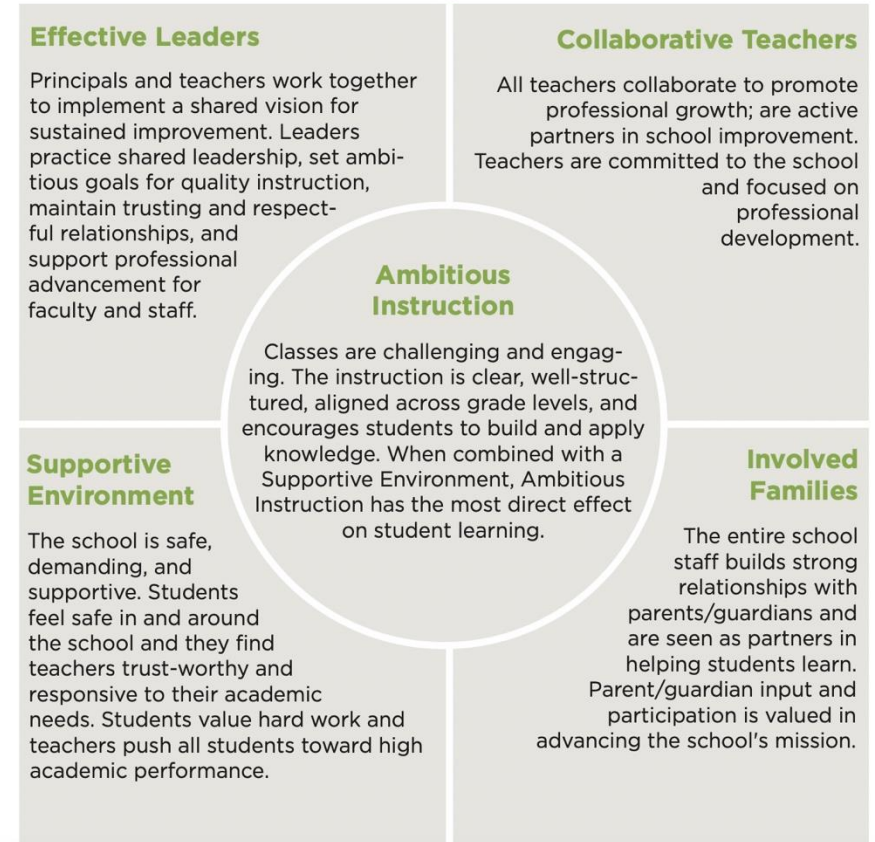
The University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research



# The 5Essentials



## The Characteristics of a School Considered Strong in the 5Essentials





“Arguing for the significance of one individual support over another is tempting, but we ultimately came to view the five supports as an organized system of elements in dynamic interaction with one another. As such, primary value lies in their integration and mutual reinforcement. In this sense, school development is much like baking a cake...Without sugar, it will be tasteless. Without eggs or baking powder, the cake will be flat and chewy...if one ingredient is absent, it is just not a cake. “





# Wins for Districts and Communities

- Reduced suspensions and high-risk behaviors
- Increased family and youth involvement in site-based decisions
- Expanded mental and physical health resources leading to improved health
- High levels of participation in afterschool programs
- Increased high school graduation rate



# What Does Effective Family Engagement Look Like?



*We have a choice about this crisis. As educators, we can make our “new normal” better than the old, engaging parents as the partners they are. Or we can wait for parents to lose whatever faith in us remains. They cannot unsee what they have witnessed so vividly in their own living rooms.*

**Dr. Sonja Santelises**  
CEO, Baltimore Public Schools

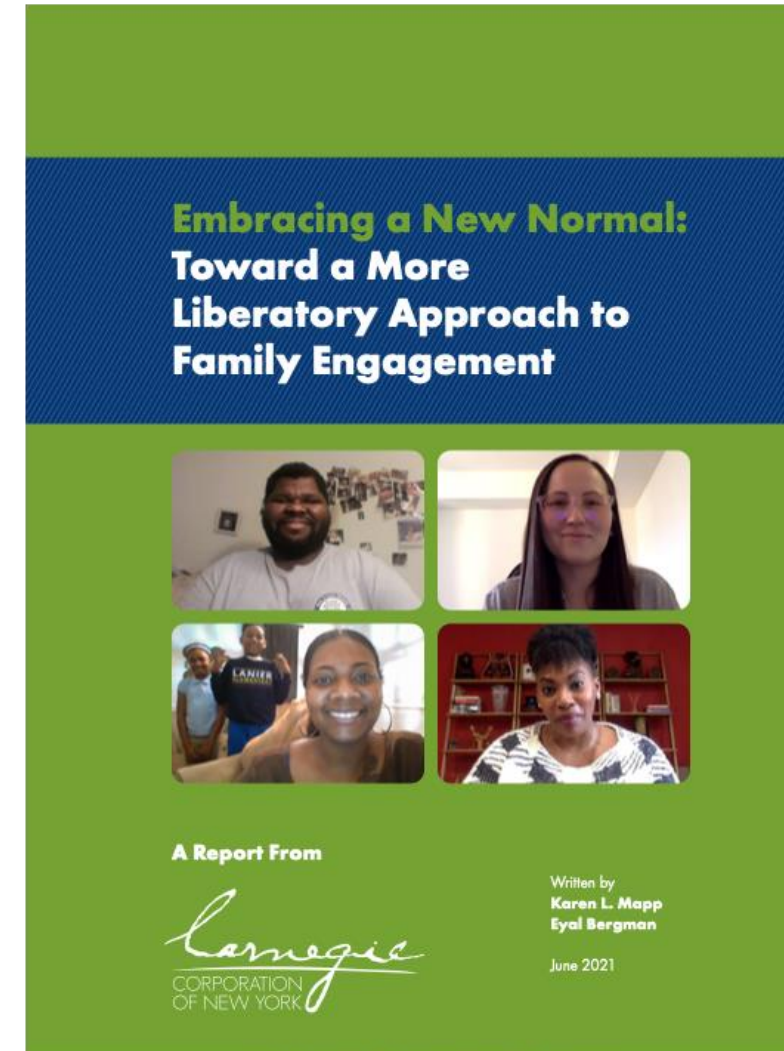


# The New Normal of Family Engagement is:

Liberatory

Solidarity-driven

Equity-focused

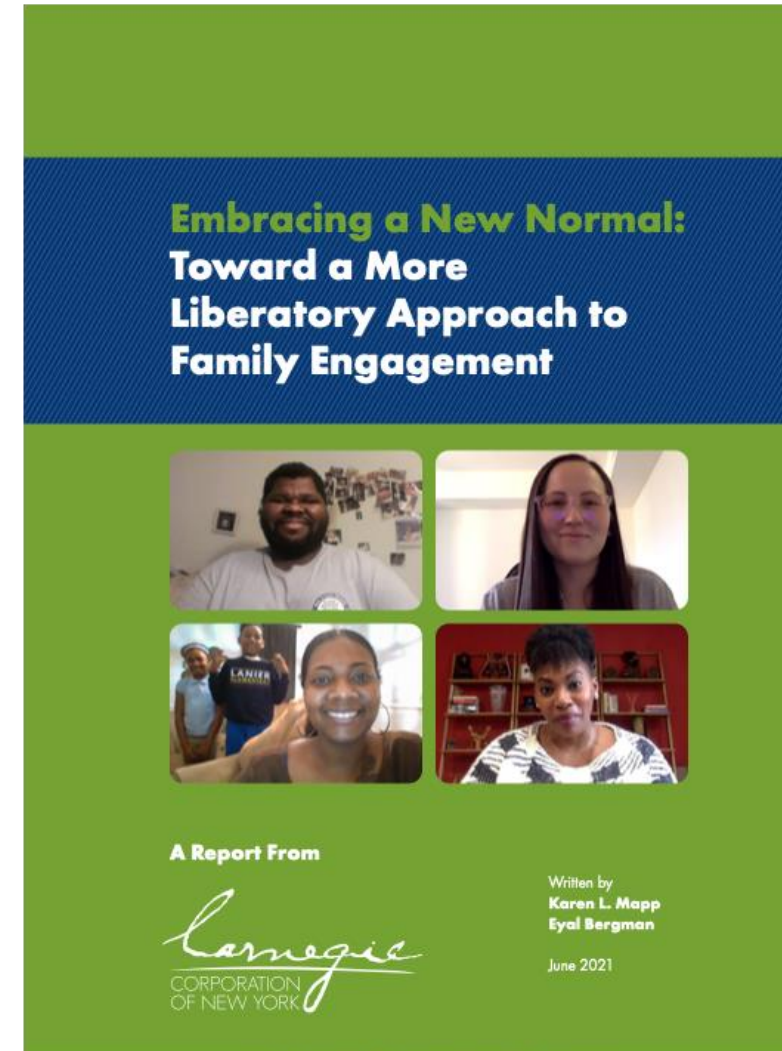


# Turn-and-Talk: What do these terms mean to you?

Liberatory

Solidarity-driven

Equity-focused





How do we  
do it? Where  
do we start?





We start with our  
own core beliefs



# Our core



# Core Beliefs Survey



## Core Belief One

- All families have dreams for their children and want the best for them.

*“...I believe that all parents hold big expectations for the role that schools will play in the life chances of their children. They all harbor a large wish list of dreams and aspirations for their youngsters. All families care deeply about their children’s education and hope that their progeny will be happier, more productive, and more successful than they have been in their lives.” (Lightfoot, 2003)*

# Core Belief Two

All families have the  
capacity to support  
their children's  
learning.



## Resources vs Capacity



**Resources:** a stock or supply of money, materials, staff, and other assets that can be drawn on by a person or organization in order to function effectively.



**Capacity:** the ability or power to do, experience, or understand something.



# Core Belief Three

Families and  
school/program staff should  
be equal partners.



# Core Belief Four

- The responsibility for building and sustaining partnerships between school, home, and community rests primarily with school/program staff, especially school/program leaders.





*The moment is  
meeting the  
The Dual  
Capacity-  
Building  
Framework for  
Family School  
Partnerships*

## The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships (Version 2)



# The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships (Version 2)



# The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)

## The Challenge



### Educators

- Have not been exposed to strong examples of family engagement
- Have received minimal training
- May not see partnership as an essential practice
- May have developed deficit mindsets



### Families

- Have not been exposed to strong examples of family engagement
- Have had negative past experiences with schools and educators
- May not feel invited to contribute to their children's education
- May feel disrespected, unheard, and unvalued



## Educators

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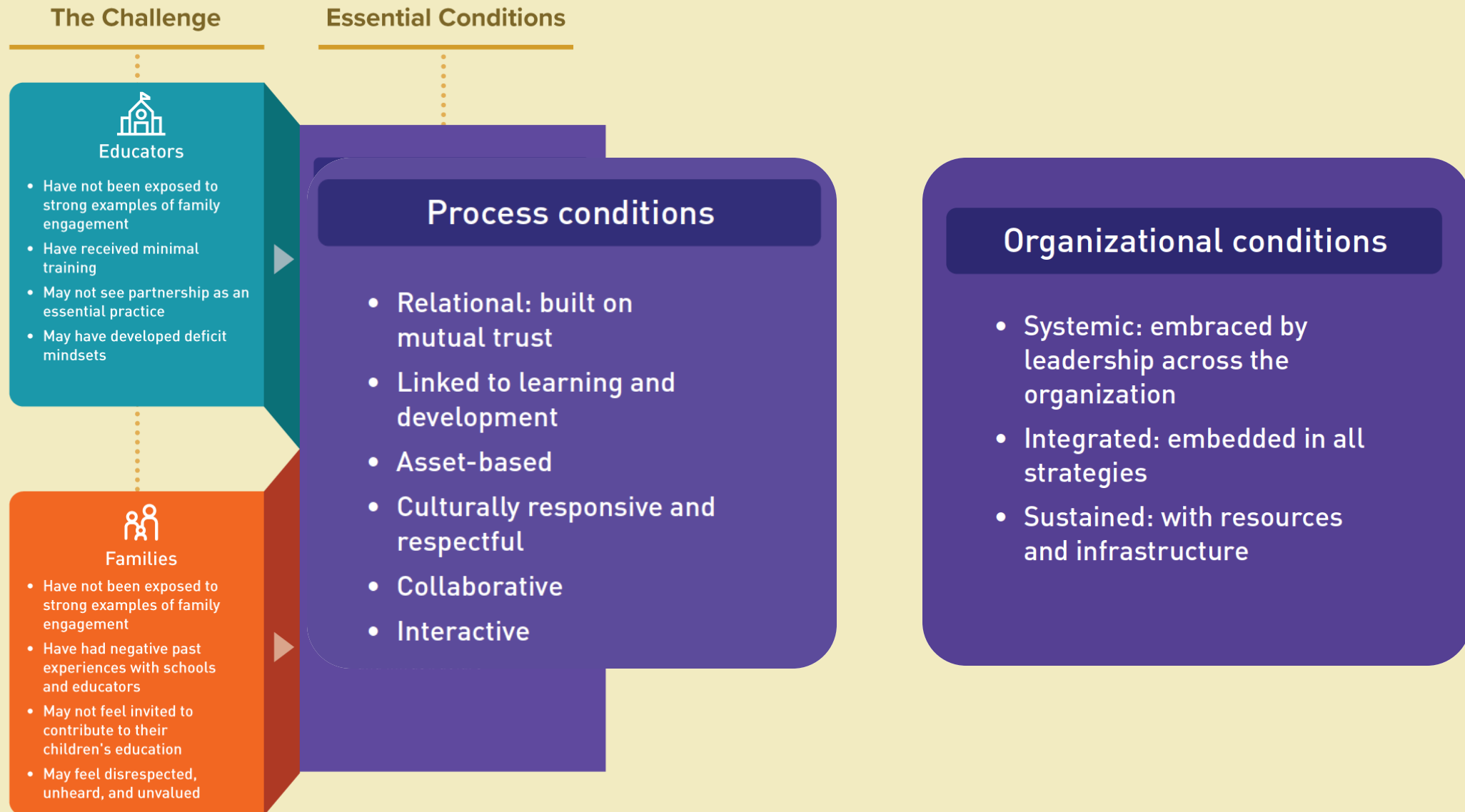


## Families

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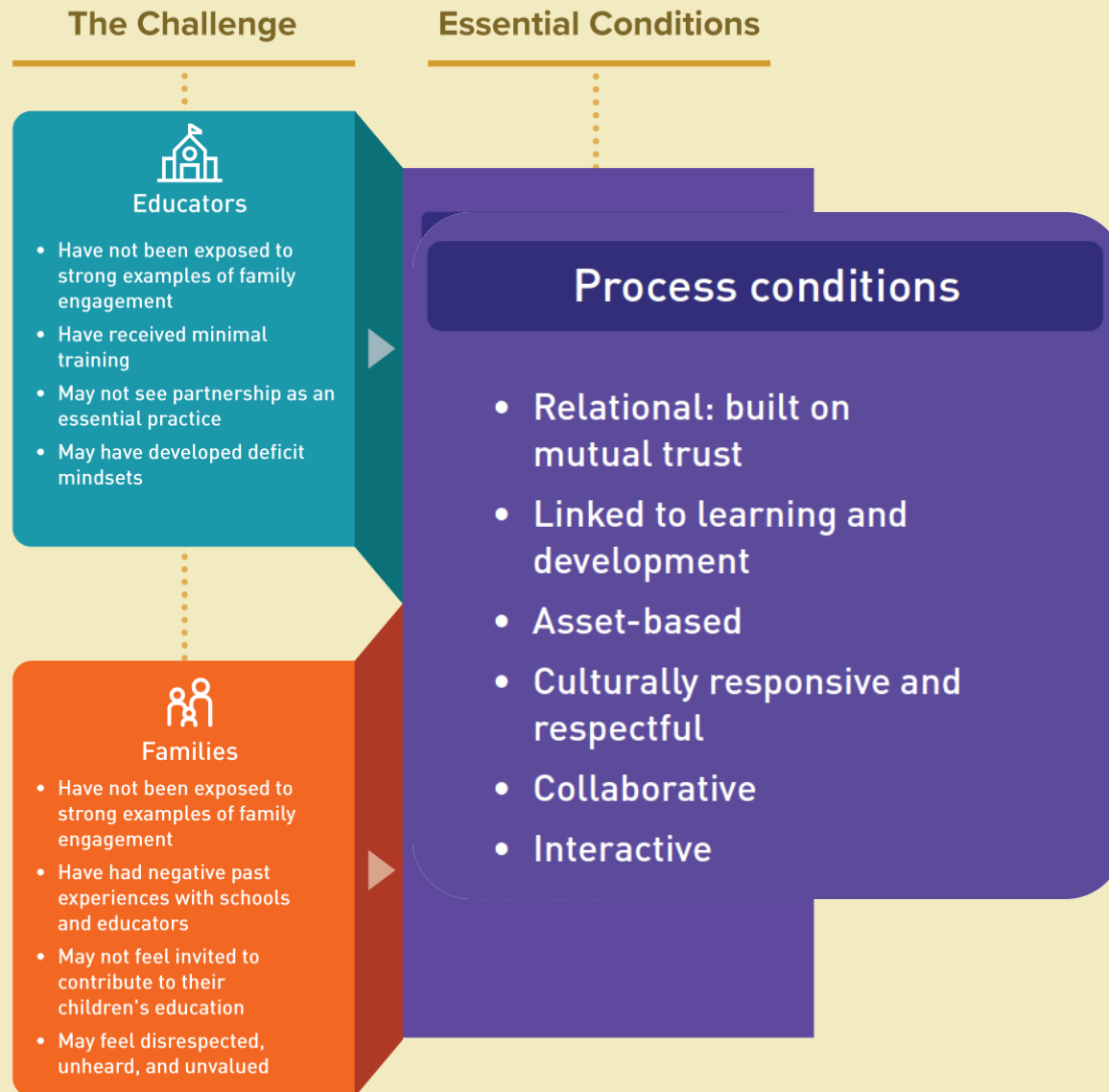
# The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)



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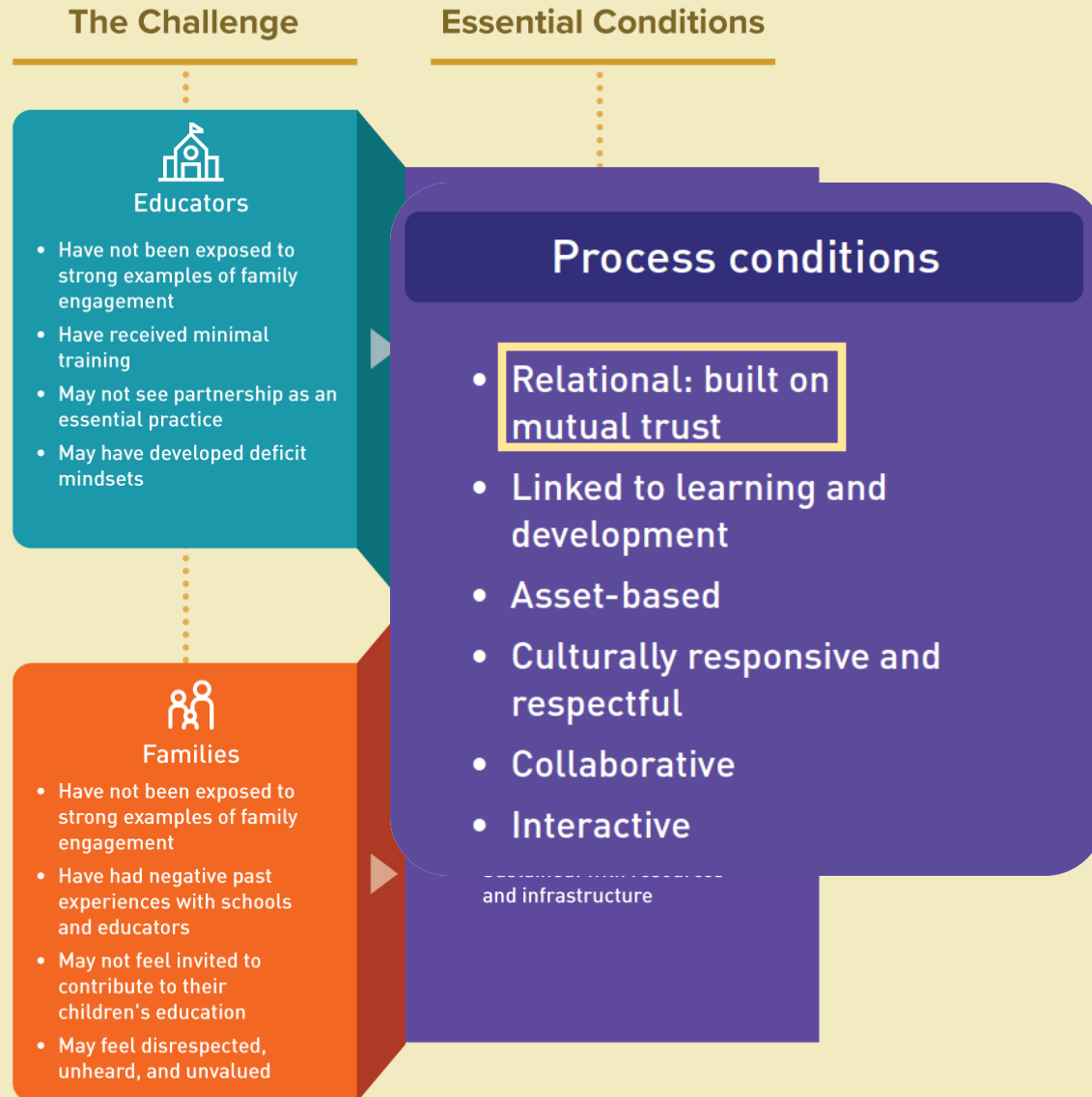
What do you do when  
you want to build trust  
with another person?

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# The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)



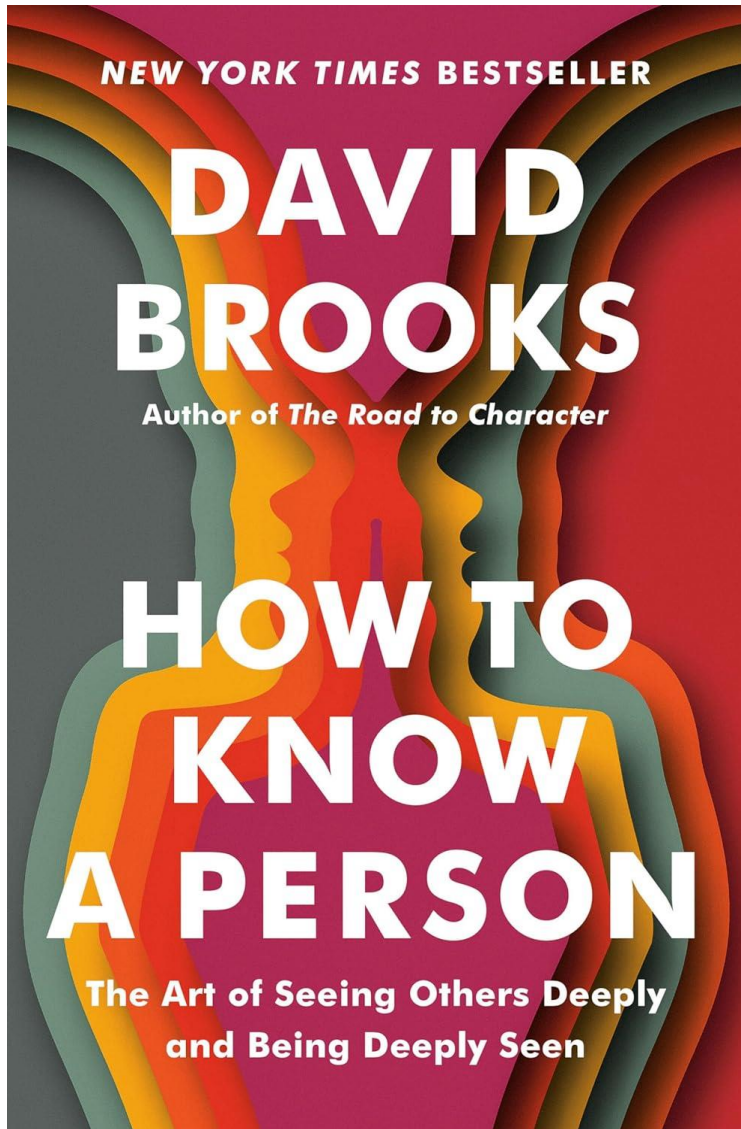
## Elements of relational trust

Respect

Competence

Integrity

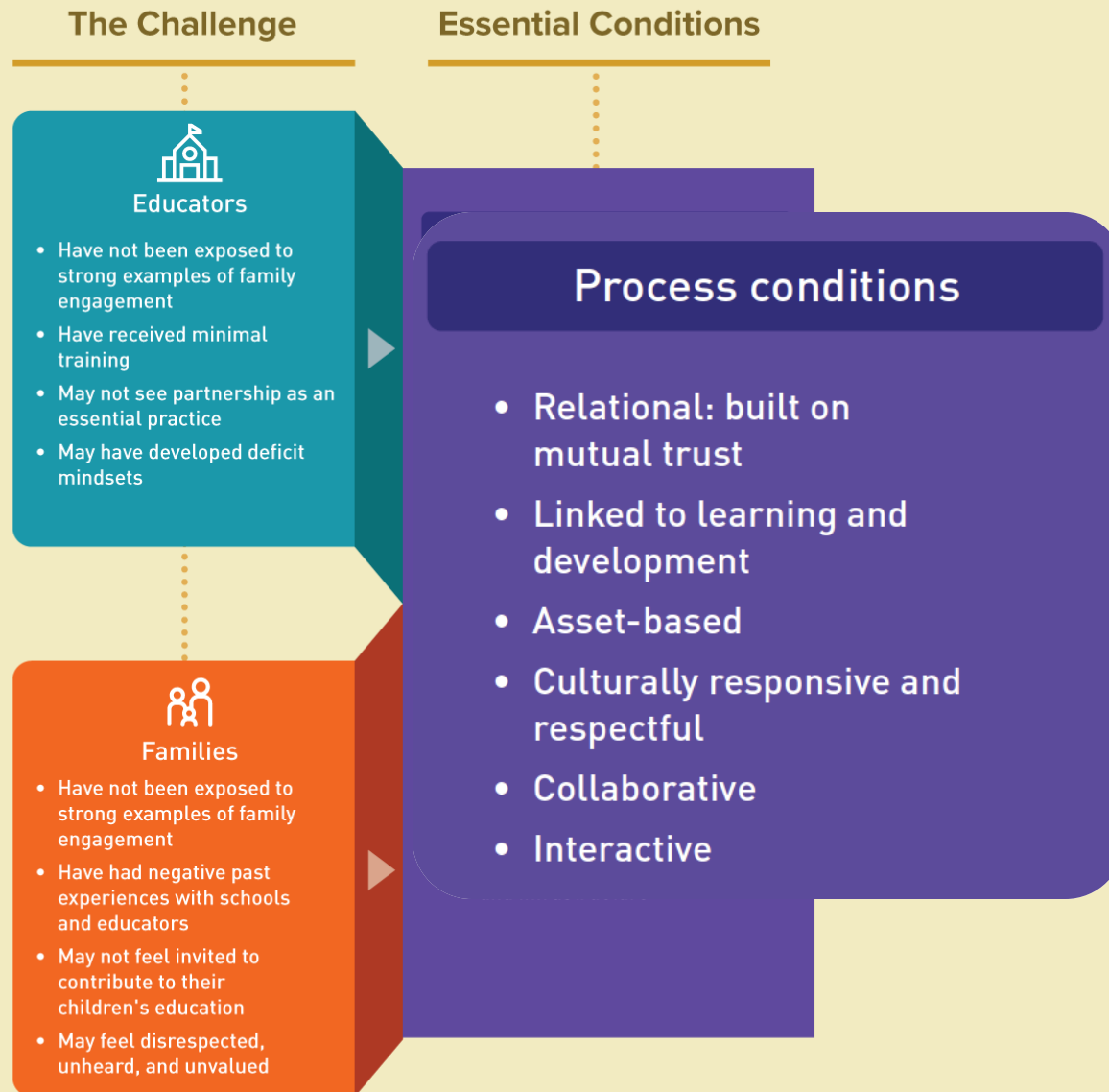
Personal regard



“Am I a person to you? Do you care about me? Am I a priority to you?” The answers to those questions are conveyed in your gaze before they are conveyed by your words. It’s a gaze that radiates respect...Respect is a gift you offer with your eyes.

# The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)

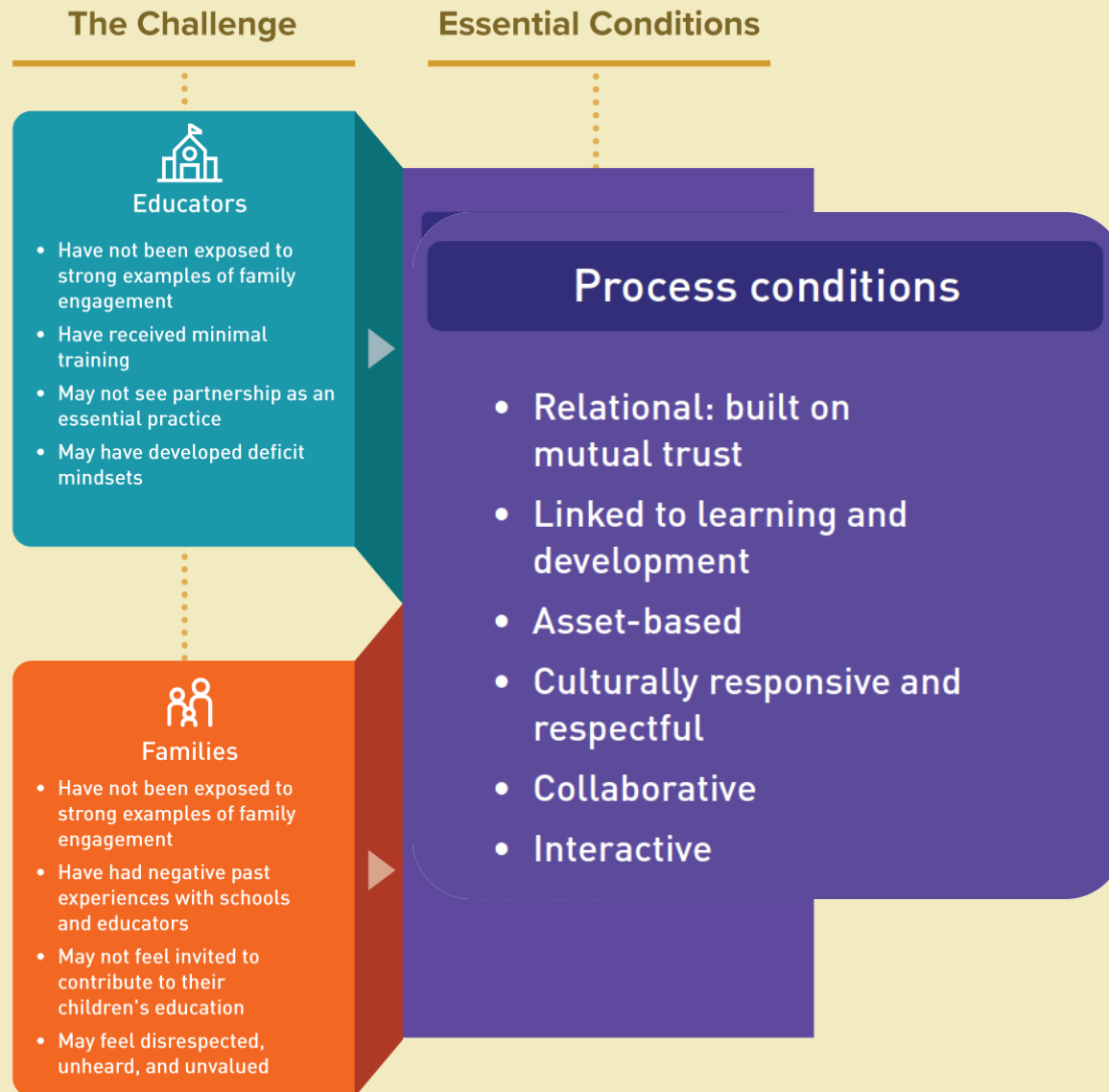


Linked to  
Learning/Development  
Exercise

- List at least five events/activities that schools currently have for families (think across the entire school year)
- Circle the activities which fit the following criteria:
  - Families leave knowing what their child should know or be able to do (the learning/developmental goals) at that grade/age level and their standing
  - They leave knowing *how* (through practice) to employ a new tool or activity at home to support those goals and student success
  - Families had the opportunity to share learning strategies and knowledge about their child with educators

# The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)









# The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

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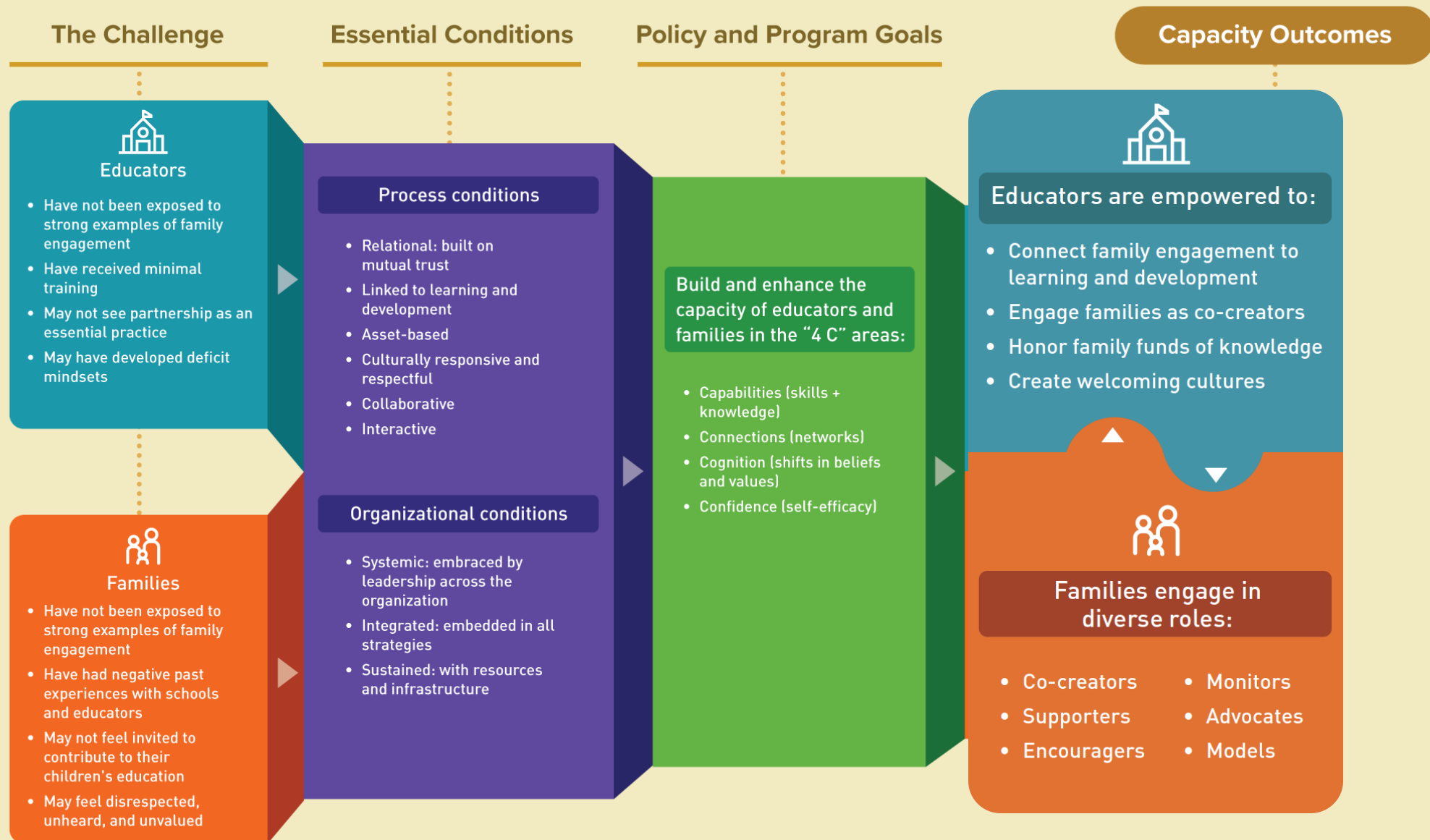
# The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)




# The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships

(Version 2)





# The Dual Capacity-Building Framework for Family-School Partnerships (Version 2)





Engagement is a  
STRATEGY, not a GOAL







Shift the conditions for family engagement within your sphere of influence.



# Additional Resources

- Free, online course: *Family Engagement in Education, The Dual Capacity-Building Framework*
- Harvard PPE Institute, July 20-24, 2025: Family Engagement in Education, Creating Effective Home-School Partnerships

